

Tuition Assistance Program for Employees Working in Facilities Caring for Individuals with Special Needs

Helping Communities Meet the Learning Needs of All Their Children and Adults

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DIVISION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND WORKFORCE PREPARATION

The tuition assistance program is being developed to provide tuition assistance to employees of health care facilities serving individuals with mental illness or mental retardation. The Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Department of Human Services have partnered to establish the incentive program. Through the program, community colleges are partnered with health care facilities serving individuals with mental illness or retardation. Employers match state funding appropriated for the program on a dollar-for-dollar basis for participating employees' tuition.

Program Contacts

Contact	Community College	Email	Phone
Rhonda Seibert	Northeast Iowa	seibertr@nicc.edu	(800) 728-2256
Karen Pierson	North Iowa Area	pierskar@niacc.edu	(641) 422-4003
Bernie Wise/Barb Grandstaff	Iowa Lakes	bwise@iowalakes.edu	(712) 852-5249
Aletha Stubbe	Northwest Iowa	aletheas@nwicc.edu	(800) 352-4907
Marlene McComas	Iowa Central	mccomas@iowacentral.edu	(515) 576-0099
Chris Russell	Iowa Valley	chris.russell@iavalley.edu	(641) 752-7106
Linda Allen	Hawkeye	lallen@hawkeyecollege.edu	(319) 296-4232
Nancy Kothenbeutel	Eastern Iowa	nkothenbeutel@eicc.edu	(563) 336-3328
Bill Lamb	Kirkwood	bill.lamb@kirkwood.edu	(319) 398-5509
Sally Schroeder	Des Moines Area	ssschroeder@dmacc.edu	(515) 964-6875
Gloria Stewart	Western Iowa Tech	Stewarg@witcc.edu	(712) 274-8733
Dorothy Duran	Iowa Western	dduran@iwcc.edu	(800) 432-5852
Matt Thompson	Southwestern	thompson@swccia.edu	(641) 782-7081
Ann Aulwes	Indian Hills	aaulwes@ihcc.cc.ia.us	(641) 683-5165
Verlyn Fick	Southeastern	vfick@sccia.edu	(866) 722-4692



COMMUNITY COLLEGES & WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Grimes State Office Building
400 E 14th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

Catherine Vance, Consultant
Phone: 515-281-4722
Fax: 515-281-6544

E-mail:

Catherine.Vance@iowa.gov

Program Overview

The tuition assistance program provides tuition assistance for individuals who are employees of health care facilities providing services to individuals with mental retardation and mental illness. Through the program, employees of participating agencies may receive tuition-free coursework at a participating community college. Participating agencies match state funds allocated to community colleges on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Half of the tuition of each student/employee is covered by the employer, half by state funding allocated to a community college. Participating employers may not charge employees for any portion of students' tuition costs.

Through the program, participating students may receive tuition assistance for up to six credits per semester. Students may register for any credit courses within a course of study leading to a degree applicable to the health care workforce and employment by health care facilities providing services to adults with mental illness or mental retardation. The student may enroll at any Iowa community college partnering with the students' employer. The students' coursework may include any college courses within a curriculum leading to an AAS, AS/CO, AS, or AA degree.

Eligibility

Employers

- Must be a health care facility serving adults with mental illness or retardation (ICF/MR, ICF/PMI, RCF/MR, RCF/PMI, HCBS/MR, and Habilitation).

Community Colleges

- All 15 community colleges are eligible to participate and receive state funds.

Students

- Must be an employee of a participating health care facility.
- Must have been employed by a designated health care facility for a period of at least 60 days or 240 hours prior to enrollment.
- Must be a resident of Iowa.

Responsibilities

Employers

- Identify and encourage eligible employees to become students and enroll in coursework that will assist the student and employer in providing an improved quality of care to residents.
- Enter into an agreement with one or more community colleges. The agreement must specify the method of payment for match.
- Pay partnering community colleges for half of participating employee's tuition costs.
- Provide documentation to participating students that can be provided to the partnering college(s) indicating the billing arrangement for the participating agency's match.

Community Colleges

- Enter into an agreement with one or more health care providers.
- Manage the tuition assistance program at the local level including utilizing state funds allocated to the college for the program and billing participating employers.
- Assign college staff to assist eligible students with the course registration process.
- Assign college staff to assist eligible students with applying for financial aid to cover fees, books and other non-tuition costs.
- Submit requested information to the Department and partnering agencies/employers following each term of enrollment.

Students

- Communicate an interest in the program to eligible employer.
- Provide to the college documentation from the employer indicating method of payment for the employer's match.
- Pay for other non-tuition costs including course fees and books (students may apply for financial aid, as eligible).
- Maintain employment of at least 20 hours per week while taking the college courses.

Procedure for course registration

Each participating agency will certify eligibility on a person-by-person basis and send required information to the respective college.

Required information includes: student name,

identification number, address, date of birth, name of employing agency, verification of work history meeting the policy requirements, and course(s) the student will take during the current term.